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FEDERAL BUREAU

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INVESTIGATION

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INFORMATION

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Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : Director, FBI

DATE: February 14, 1952

FROM : SAC, St. Louis (100-11169)

REGISTERED MAIL

SUBJECT: ASSOCIATION FOR THE STUDY OF
NEGRO LIFE AND HISTORY
INTERNAL SECURITY - C

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On January 3, 1952, HOWARD WOODS, City Editor, St. Louis Argus, a local Negro newspaper, advised SA ROBERT B. HAAG that he had received a mimeographed communication requesting his presence at a meeting of an organization identified as the "Association for the Study of Negro Life and History." This communication indicated that the meeting was to be held on January 3, 1952, at the Vagabond Club, 6400 Vandeventer Place, St. Louis. He stated that the mailing address for the organization was indicated as 4757 Labadie, St. Louis, which is the residence address of VIRGINIA BRODINE, who, according to Confidential Informant [redacted] as indicated in information furnished by the informant to SA HUGH M. ANDERSON on December 13, 1950, was a member of the Communist Party and elected a group leader of the east side area of the CP of St. Louis at a meeting of the area held on December 11, 1950.

FOIA(b)(7)-(D)

Mr. WOODS, who desires that his identity be considered confidential, further advised that on January 3, 1952, he was telephonically contacted by BRODINE who inquired whether or not WOODS would attend the aforementioned meeting. BRODINE said that she was secretary of the organization.

On January 14, 1952, Reverend HERMAN DREER, 4903 Maffitt Place, St. Louis, who is the minister of King's Way Baptist Church, 4200 Finney Avenue, St. Louis, and a professor of history at Stowe's Teachers College, St. Louis, appeared at this office seeking information concerning instant organization and individuals affiliated with it. He said that the organization was a national organization with headquarters in Washington, D. C. where CHARLES WESLEY held the position of president. He said further that he had formerly been chairman of the St. Louis branch of the organization from approximately 1920 to 1942.

Reverend DREER said he attended a re-organization meeting of the organization held on January 3, 1952, at the Vagabond Club, St. Louis, upon the invitation of one VIRGINIA BRODINE, who was most active in the re-organization. He said that the purposes of the organization were (1) Celebrate Negro History Week (February 10 through 17, 1952) (2) Research to find out the extent the Negro has participated in the history of the states of Illinois, Missouri, and Kansas in fields of art, music, industry, and education.

The following officers were elected at this meeting: Chairman, Reverend HERMAN DREER (colored); Vice-chairman, NANCY PETTY (white), 3938 McPherson

HCJ:wre

cc: Washington Field
100-9171 (Virginia Brodine)

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Avenue, St. Louis; Secretary, VIRGINIA BRODINE (white), 4757 Labadie Avenue, St. Louis; Assistant Secretary, Mrs. ROBERT L. ~~WITHERSPOON~~ (colored), 20 Lewis Place, St. Louis, Missouri.

Reverend DREER said the meeting was attended by thirty-six individuals. He said when he was formerly affiliated with the organization, it consisted entirely of Negroes and now its membership also includes whites.

Reverend DREER said the purpose of his visit to this office was to seek information concerning any Communist infiltration in the organization. He explained that Reverend O. WALTER ~~WAGNER~~, Secretary, Metropolitan Church Federation, 1528 Locust, St. Louis, and LEO ~~BOHANNON~~, Secretary, Urban League, 3017 Delmar Boulevard, withdrew from the organization because of "left wingers" affiliated with same. Reverend DREER advised that these men did not identify the "left wingers" to him nor explain further. He noticed nothing irregular from a loyalty or security standpoint at the meeting and did not know any of those in attendance at the meeting to be affiliated with any subversive movement.

The Bureau policy with regard to furnishing information concerning individuals or organizations was explained to Reverend DREER, and his cooperation was solicited in the event any information of a disloyal nature comes to his attention.

The January 11, 1952, issue of the St. Louis Argus contained an article on page one, column one, entitled "Dreer Takes Action--Dissolve History Wk. Group Here." This article makes reference to the meeting of instant organization held on January 3, 1952, and quotes Reverend DREER as saying that the organization had been dissolved because of "information received." The article states further "The Argus learned, however, that the injection of what was described as 'extreme left wing' elements was the main cause of the disbanding."

With regard to DREER, on September 9, 1943, an anonymous source furnished SA R. H. HALLERBERG a contact list maintained at the CP of Missouri headquarters, 1041A North Grand Boulevard, St. Louis. This list included DREER's name.

On January 23, 1945, Confidential Informant [redacted] advised SA A. GLENWOOD GILLILAND that DREER's name appeared on a mailing list of the CPA of Missouri. FOIA(b)(7)-(D)

On October 11, 1945, Confidential Informant [redacted] furnished SA KELLY E. GIBBONS a mimeographed outline bearing the caption "Institute on Race Relations Sponsored by Social Service Employees, CIO, Will Present At Its Second Session October 16 WILLIAM PATTERSON speaking on the Economic Approach to Race Prejudice

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in Terms of American Economics." This announcement, issued by UOPWA - CIO - further indicated that on October 23, 1945, Reverend DREER was scheduled to speak on the topic "Contributions of the Negro to American Culture."

Inasmuch as the St. Louis branch of subject organization was dissolved immediately following its reorganization, no further action is contemplated by this office and no report is being submitted. The information contained herein may be of some interest to the Washington Field Division inasmuch as the national headquarters of the organization are apparently located in that city.

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